SI. No.	Name of the District	Long Distance Public Telephones 1	Opened During:
		1991-92 1992-93	1993-94
26.	Solapur	90 70	152
27.	Thane	20 46	119
28.	Wardha	1 40	57
29.	Yeotmal	13 14	87
	TOTAL:	422 945	2781

Delegation of Powers to Central Government Departments

2686. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various departments of the Central Government have powers under the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules to enter into contracts costing more than two lakhs U.S. dollars with international agencies for consultancy services in connection with the preparation of a project report for development of management information system;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Department of Science and Technology or National Informatic Centre under Planning Commission have necessary expertise for rendering such consultancy services or for carrying out the necessary networking international level; and

(c) if so, the reasons for awarding such contracts to any outside foreign/ international agency resulting in loss of foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Ministries/Departments do not have powers to enter into contracts with international agencies for consultancy services. However, they can do so with the previous consent of the Ministry of Finance.

(b) Department of Science and Technology have no expertise, at present. for rendering consultancy expertise services for carrying out net working at national and international level. However, NIC under the Planning Commission have such expertise.

(c) No contracts have been awarded by the Department of Science and Technology to foreign agencies for consultancy services for carrying out networking.

Duping Public by Delhi Branch of M/s. Favourite Small Investment Company

2687. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s. Favourite Small Investment Co., Calcutta was allowed to take deposits in the name of Small Savings Scheme from public and it collected a huge amount from public through their branch in Delhi during the year 1984;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Company has since wound up its Delhi office after duping the public; and

(c) if so, what remedial steps are being taken to refund the deposits of the innocent public?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) M/s. Favourite Small Investment Limited, Calcutta is a residuary non-banking company, with one of its branches in Delhi, accepting deposits from the public. Separate information

regarding deposit amounts collected in 1084 is not readily available.

(b) and (c) Since the company had not complied with the provisions of Residuary Non-Banking Companies (Reserve Bank) Directions 1987, an order was issued by the Reserve Bank of India on 7th August, 1992 prohibiting it from accepting fresh deposits. The Calcutta High Court has thereafter appointed three Joint Special Officers to take charge and administer the affairs of the company including preparation of a scheme for refund of money to the depositors.

Pilferage of Cheques

2688. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for letting go the Bombay accused of multi-crore racket involving pilferage and encashment of cheques and other financial instruments: and

(b) how the affected parties were compensated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) have reported that two cases have been registered by their Bombay branch in this regard and after finalisation of investigation in one case a decision has been taken to prosecute the accused persons in Court of law. In the second case, investigation is in progress. The Banks concerned, where such wrongful encashment of third party cheques has taken place, have taken prompt disciplinary action against erring officials who facilitated such alleged fraudulent encashments.

(b) The Reserve Bank of India has advised the banks that once an irregularity has been committed by its staff towards any constituent it should at once acknowledge its liability and pay the just claim and not resort to unnecessary litigations. The banks concerned have already initiated necessary action for settlement of claims of the rightful beneficiaries.

Collection of Direct Taxes

2689. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total estimates and actual collection of Direct Taxes during the year 1993-94;

(b) whether there is any short-fall, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the amount spent by Government on Wages and Salaries for the Officers and Staff of Income Tax Department and the percentage of such expenses to the Revenue Collections?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) The information is given below:—

(Rupees in Crores)

	Budget Estimates 1993-94	Revised Estimates 1993-94	Actual Collection 1993-94
Corporation tax	10500	10500	9934
Income tax	9500	'-'500	9158
Interest tax	900	900	698
Wealth tax	200	115	139
Expenditure tax	150	190	217
Gift tax	10	5	4